

June 29, 2000

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1304, QUALITY HEALTH-CARE COALITION
ACT OF 2000

Statement of HON. RON PAUL OF TEXAS

[Pages: H5622]

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the rule. It is an imperfect rule, but this bill needs to be brought to the floor.

H.R. 1304 is the only bill that I have seen in the last 3 years, probably in the last 30 years, that would move us in a proper direction for health care in this country. For 30 years now we have moved in the direction, not toward socialized medicine, we do not have socialized medicine, we have a mess. We have a monster we created called 'medical management.' But we have moved toward corporate medicine.

Who are the greatest opponents of H.R. 1304? The HMOs and the insurance companies.

All we are asking for here is a little bit of return of freedom to the physician, that is, for the right of the physician to freedom of contract, to associate. We are giving no special powers, no

special privileges. Trying to balance just to a small degree the artificial power given to the corporations who now run medicine, who mismanage medicine, who destroyed the doctor-patient relationship.

Mr. Speaker, this has given me a small bit of hope. I am thankful the leadership was willing to bring this bill to the floor tonight. We should go through, get the rule passed, and vote on this. This is the only thing that has offered any hope to preserve and to restore the doctor-patient relationship.

We need this desperately. We do not need to support the special corporate interests who get the money. The patient does not get the care. The doctors are unhappy. The hospitals are unhappy. And who lobbies against this? Corporate interests. This is total destruction of the doctor-patient relationship.

All we want to ask for is the freedom to associate and the freedom to contract. If they do not want to become a union, doctors do not have to. They had the power to become unions in the 19th century, but under ethical conditions they did not. Nobody tells doctors that they have to, if we remove this obstacle.